



City of Austin

Delia Garza, Mayor Pro Tem District 2

301 W. 2nd St., Austin, TX 78701
(512) 978-2102, Fax (512) 978-2112
delia.garza@austintexas.gov

FY21 BUDGET AMENDMENT: BRIDGING THE FOOD ACCESS GAP IN THE EASTERN CRESCENT

Amendment No. (Garza) and the accompanying policy direction support a mobile market program to bring affordable groceries to underserved communities in the Eastern Crescent. The mobile market program proposed by Equidad ATX acts like a grocery store on wheels, bringing residents affordable groceries, health and wellness supplies and resources, financial literacy resources, and other services, while minimizing the burdens of traveling to other parts of town for these basic needs.

Many of the City's food access efforts to date seem to be fundamentally missing what the community in Del Valle and other underserved areas have been saying they need for over 10 years—they have consistently asked for a full-service grocery store that provides healthy food among other services. Much of staff's efforts have been designed only to provide limited healthy food options, missing the rest of the equation. A mobile grocery store program with affordable and varied options will act as a bridge between what is currently available and funded, and what the community has been asking for.

PRIOR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE FOOD ACCESS

Outlined below are specific policy efforts to improve food access in underserved areas, such as Del Valle, each made alongside continued engagement with the community and business partners.

2016

- FY16 Budget:
 - Healthy Corner Store Initiative: small grants to support healthy food options in corner stores.
- Resolution No. 20160303-020 formed a food access working group.

2017

- FY17 Budget:
 - Healthy Food Access Initiative funded a healthy food retail incubator and Fresh for Less program.
 - Funded Healthy Food Access coordinator position.
 - Funded extensive SNAP outreach.
- Visited Houston to learn about public/private solutions to incentivize food retail.

2018

- Funded a market study to support food retail in underserved areas.
- Advocated for community-informed initiatives as a strategy in Strategic Direction 2023.
- Supported Chapter 380 Policy Framework that allows incentives for food retail with community benefit.
- Resolution No. 20181018-039 to leverage federally created Opportunity Zones to incentivize food retail in underserved areas.

2019

- Velocity Crossing PID created with infrastructure for H-E-B site in Del Valle
- Resolution No. 20190919-088 to explore using CDBG funds for food retail infrastructure in underserved areas.